

13 May 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF

SUBJECT: House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing on U.S. Narcotics Control  
Efforts in the Middle East & Southwest Asia

1. The Task Force on International Narcotics Control of the House Foreign Affairs Committee held an open hearing today on the subject issue. Testimony was taken from the following witnesses:

--Ann Wrobleski, Acting Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of  
International Narcotics Matters

--Robert Peck, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern &  
South Asian Affairs

--Raymond J. McKinnon, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of  
International Programs, Drug Enforcement Agency

--James A. Norris, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia and  
Near East, Agency for International Development

2. Rep. Larry Smith (D, Fla) chaired the session as Task Force Chairman, and was joined by Rep. Ben Gilman (R, NY). The hearing began shortly after 1400 hours and concluded at 1530. Ms. Wrobleski, Mr. McKinnon and Mr. Norris offered prepared testimony, and Mr. Peck made a few oral remarks (I was only able to get a copy of the DEA testimony, which is attached).

3. Rep. Smith stated at the outset that the focus of the hearing would be on Pakistan, and on reports of Syrian involvement in international drug trafficking. It became clear during the hearing that Task Force members were disturbed by reports of increased opium production in Pakistan (estimated at over 100 metric tons; last year's production was said to be approximately 70 metric tons), and repeatedly questioned the witnesses about the sufficiency of Pakistan's eradication efforts. Ms. Wrobleski attributed the increase to "consumption patterns in the region" -- that is, increased indigenous demand (addiction) for opium and heroin -- increased prices for raw heroin, and good weather (abundant rainfall). She admitted that there had been what she termed a "slippage" in the Pakistan's eradication efforts this past year, and expressed concern for the increased threat of Southwest Asian heroin trafficking into the United States as a result, but maintained that the recent enforcement problems are temporary and that the government is still strongly committed to joint control efforts with the United States.

4. Rep. Smith did not seem satisfied with this. He questioned the AID witness very closely on their economic assistance programs with Pakistan, and asked whether we might be indirectly subsidizing drug production with these funds (Mr. Norris replied that AID projects in Pakistan are denied to farmers who fail to participate in eradication efforts). He also prodded State

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witnesses about efforts to get Pakistan to sign an extradition treaty with the United States. Ms. Wroblewski's reply was that those discussions are ongoing, but do not offer any immediate prospects for agreement on a treaty. This drew a response from Rep. Smith that Pakistan's attitude in this matter may influence Congressional feelings about future foreign aid to that country.

5. There were questions about what role corruption in Pakistan's government may have on enforcement efforts (DEA acknowledged that there was "individual" corruption within the government in Pakistan, but does not believe it to be widespread or an impediment, at present, to their enforcement efforts), and the current eradication methods used in Pakistan (the crops are plowed under by hand and the Pakistani's resist efforts to spray herbicides). This also brought a confirmation from DEA that "in the best of years" the by-hand eradication method has never destroyed more than half of the crops. State argued that Pakistan has made progress, citing the fact that 5 years ago most of the raw drug crop production came from irrigated fields, whereas now 90 percent comes from "rain-fed" land (inferring that the government has made it harder for traffickers to grow the crops). However, DEA testimony indicated that Pakistan's enforcement efforts also suffer from an inability to stop poppy growing in areas controlled by tribal chiefs, and from the government's inability to interdict the flow of opium and heroin from Afghanistan into Pakistan.


6. There were questions about "U.S.-based" Pakistani heroin traffickers; DEA responded that they estimate there are about 30 separate trafficking organizations in Pakistan, with distribution networks that reach into the United States, but none of which are "U.S.-based". However, DEA also provided testimony to the effect that more than one-third of all heroin consumed in the U.S. is either manufactured in, or transshipped thru, Pakistan.

7. Brief statements were made about the current situation in other countries. The Afghanistan government was labeled as lacking either the will or ability to address the trafficking problem on its soil; because of its location, India's role as a major heroin exporter is growing (but DEA said it gets good cooperation from the government there and is about to open a new office in Bombay); Iran apparently has been very successful in its eradication efforts since 1980 (although large amounts of opiates are apparently still entering the country from the east); Cyprus and Egypt were characterized as major transshipment points -- Egypt for heroin into Europe, and Cyprus for Lebanese trafficking of heroin and hashish into the United States. DEA testified that virtually all of the heroin produced in Lebanon is destined for the United States. Manpower is a problem according to DEA -- they only have one agent to cover Egypt and all of North Africa; 6 agents in Turkey, 5 in India, 15 in Pakistan, and 2 in Syria.


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8. Discussion turned to Syria. Rep. Smith told the witnesses that we have intelligence (source and details not specified) that indicates high Syrian military and governmental officials may be involved in the trafficking of opium and hashish grown in the Bekaa Valley. He asked DEA about the wisdom of a program they run whereby Syrian police officials are invited to this country to observe our narcotics detection training and technology. Mr. McKinnon responded that the goal was to encourage these officials to initiate enforcement efforts upon their return to Syria, but admitted that they subsequently have apparently been coopted and/or blocked by high officials. Rep. Smith admonished them to rethink this program. He also asked for a complete report from DEA on what we know about Syrian involvement in drug trafficking, and asked that "any sensitive information" be highlighted so that he is aware of how to handle it. He advised the State witnesses that the Department is perhaps focusing too much on South America and Europe vis a vis the drug trafficking problem, and said he would hold another hearing soon to pursue what is being done to combat the problems he sees emanating from Southwest Asia. The hearing was then adjourned.

  
Legislative Liaison, IC Staff

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cc: DD/ICS  
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